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[on the recommendation of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (E/2015/15/Add.2)]

2015/30. Restructuring the conference structure of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific to be fit for the evolving post-2015 development agenda

The Economic and Social Council,

Noting the adoption of resolution 71/1 by the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific at its seventy-first session, held in Bangkok from 25 to 29 May 2015,

Endorses the restructuring of the conference structure of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific to be fit for the evolving post-2015 development agenda, as set out in resolution 71/1 and the annexes thereto, which are annexed to the present resolution.

54th plenary meeting
22 July 2015

Annex

Resolution 71/1

Restructuring the conference structure of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific to be fit for the evolving post-2015 development agenda

The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific,

Recalling its resolutions 69/1 of 1 May 2013, in which it decided to conduct, at its seventy-first session, a review of the progress in implementation of that resolution, and 70/11 of 8 August 2014 on implementing the outcome of the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development,

Recalling also the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in June 2012, entitled "The future we want",[1] in particular paragraph 100, in which the Conference participants

[1] General Assembly resolution 66/288, annex.

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emphasized that regional and subregional organizations, including the United Nations regional commissions and their subregional offices, had a significant role to play in promoting a balanced integration of the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development in their respective regions,

Acknowledging recent international meetings and conferences that featured issues related to sustainable development and the role of regional organizations, and noting with appreciation the successful holding and outcome of the Third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, held in Sendai, Japan, from 14 to 18 March 2015,[2] and the adoption of the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway in September 2014 by the third International Conference on Small Island Developing States in Apia,[3]

Bearing in mind the continuing discussions on the post-2015 development agenda taking place at the General Assembly, and recognizing the relevant meetings and conferences, including the high-level political forum on sustainable development, to be held in New York from 26 June to 8 July 2015, the third International Conference on Financing for Development, to be held in Addis Ababa from 13 to 16 July 2015, and the United Nations summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda, to be held in New York from 25 to 27 September 2015 as a high-level plenary meeting at the seventieth session of the General Assembly,

Noting the Commission's unique role as the most representative body in Asia and the Pacific and its comprehensive mandate as the main economic and social development centre of the United Nations development system in the region,

Recognizing the need for the Commission to adapt and respond to the evolving development challenges and opportunities within the Asia-Pacific region, and to be fit for purpose and in line with the evolving post-2015 development agenda,

Emphasizing, to that end, the importance of strengthening cooperation and coordination, and the need to create synergies within the United Nations development system at the global, regional and country levels in the Asia-Pacific region through enhanced collaboration between the secretariat and the funds, programmes, specialized agencies and other entities of the United Nations development system, as well as the need to build new partnerships within that system in line with General Assembly resolution 67/226 of 21 December 2012 on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system,

Underlining that the effectiveness and efficiency of its conference structure benefit from engagement and communication between member States and the secretariat, as well as with major groups and other stakeholders, in accordance with its rules and procedures,

Commending the Executive Secretary on the initiatives taken to strengthen the effectiveness and efficiency of the conference structure and to facilitate an effective process of consultation among members and associate members on a comprehensive and thorough review of the conference structure of the Commission,

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[2] General Assembly resolution 69/283, annexes I and II.

[3] General Assembly resolution 69/15, annex.

Having considered the reports of the Executive Secretary on the implementation of resolution 69/1,[4]

1. *Decides* to revise its conference structure, with immediate effect, in the following manner:

(*a*) Establish a Committee on Energy as a part of its subsidiary structure, meeting biennially;

(*b*) Reconstitute the Committee on Information and Communications Technology as the Committee on Information and Communications Technology, Science, Technology and Innovation, meeting biennially;

(*c*) Reconstitute the Committee on Macroeconomic Policy, Poverty Reduction and Inclusive Development as the Committee on Macroeconomic Policy, Poverty Reduction and Financing for Development, meeting biennially;

2. *Also decides* that, as a result of the reforms enumerated in paragraph 1 above, beginning in 2016, the Committee on Information and Communications Technology, Science, Technology and Innovation, the Committee on Transport, the Committee on Social Development, the Committee on Statistics and the Committee on Environment and Development shall meet in the even years; and the Committee on Macroeconomic Policy, Poverty Reduction and Financing for Development, the Committee on Trade and Investment, the Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction and the Committee on Energy shall meet in the odd years;

3. *Reaffirms* that the conference structure of the Commission shall conform to the pattern outlined in the annexes to the present resolution;

4. *Requests* the Governing Council of each regional institution, at its next session, to consider the statute of the said regional institution to incorporate the following changes and to submit the revised statutes for the endorsement of the Commission at its seventy-second session:

(*a*) Abolish the technical committees of the regional institutions that have them;

(*b*) Ensure that the members of the Governing Councils are represented by the relevant line ministries;

(*c*) Consider that the regional institutions will be primarily funded by extrabudgetary resources;

(*d*) Ensure that regional institutions develop their capacities to assist member States in an efficient and effective manner;

(*e*) Encourage all members and associate members of the Commission to make the necessary regular annual contributions, on a voluntary basis, which are essential to the operation of the regional institutions;

5. *Decides* to review the continued substantive relevance and financial viability of each regional institution every five years, with the start and timing of such reviews linked to the year of their establishment;

6. *Calls upon* all development partners, in particular the relevant organizations of the United Nations development system, to support the Commission in promoting sustainable development in the Asia-Pacific region

[4] E/ESCAP/71/33 and E/ESCAP/71/40.

through all appropriate mechanisms, including active participation in Commission sessions and enhanced cooperation on projects and policies;

7. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to continue to undertake systematic monitoring and evaluation of the conference structure and its link to the programme priorities of the Commission;

8. *Decides* to conduct a review of the reforms initiated through the present resolution at its seventy-third session, and requests the Executive Secretary to submit a report, which will serve as a basis for that review, on the implementation of these reforms and include recommendations on further adjustments to the conference structure, if necessary.

Annex I to resolution 71/1

Conference structure of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

I. Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

1. The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific shall meet annually under an overarching theme selected by member States, with each session comprising a senior officials segment of three days followed by a ministerial segment of two days, for a total of five working days, to discuss and decide on important issues pertaining to inclusive and sustainable development in the region, decide on the recommendations of its subsidiary bodies and of the Executive Secretary, review and endorse the proposed strategic framework and programme of work and take any other decisions required in conformity with its terms of reference.

2. The session of the Special Body on Least Developed, Landlocked Developing and Pacific Island Developing Countries shall be held for a maximum of one day during the senior officials segment, with a status commensurate with the Committees of the Whole. A one-day preparatory meeting of the Special Body will be held prior to its regular session.

3. The Commission session may include a distinguished person's lecture; and high-level representatives of United Nations agencies may be invited to participate in panel discussions held during the session and corporate leaders and civil society organizations may be invited to participate in the session as appropriate, in accordance with the rules of procedure of the Commission.

4. The Informal Working Group on Draft Resolutions of the Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission, which convenes prior to the Commission session, shall be reconstituted as the Working Group on Draft Resolutions during the senior officials segment and shall have a status commensurate with the Committees of the Whole.

5. The number of simultaneous meetings of the Committees of the Whole, including their commensurate bodies, held during the senior officials segment of the annual session of the Commission shall not exceed two.

6. Draft resolutions shall reflect the substantive deliberations of member States; furthermore, without prejudice to rule 31 of the rules of procedure, members of the Commission intending to submit draft resolutions to the Commission are strongly encouraged to submit them to the Executive Secretary at least one month prior to the commencement of the session of the Commission in order to allow sufficient time

for review by members and associate members of the Commission, and the Commission shall not consider draft resolutions submitted within one week of the first day of the Commission session.

7. The report of the Commission will be composed of the decisions and resolutions of the Commission. The draft record of proceedings of the Commission, prepared by the secretariat, will be circulated among members and associate members for comment within 15 days of the conclusion of the session. Members and associate members will be requested to provide comments within 15 days of receiving the draft record of proceedings. The secretariat's final record of proceedings of the Commission session will be issued within two months of the conclusion of the session, taking into account the relevant comments of members and associate members.

8. The Commission shall serve as the regional platform for integrating the sectoral streams of the committees, with a view towards promoting sustainable development equitably through all of its three dimensions.

II. Subsidiary structure

9. The subsidiary structure of the Commission shall consist of the following nine committees:

(*a*) Committee on Macroeconomic Policy, Poverty Reduction and Financing for Development;

(*b*) Committee on Trade and Investment;

(*c*) Committee on Transport;

(*d*) Committee on Environment and Development;

(*e*) Committee on Information and Communications Technology, Science, Technology and Innovation;

(*f*) Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction;

(*g*) Committee on Social Development;

(*h*) Committee on Statistics;

(*i*) Committee on Energy.

10. The nine committees shall each meet biennially for a maximum duration of three days for each session, with joint plenary sessions between multiple committees to discuss cross-cutting issues, when possible and desirable.

11. The Commission may mandate a specific committee or multiple committees to meet in the gap year where a particular topic becomes an urgent issue for the region.

12. Within their respective areas of purview, the committees shall:

(*a*) Review and analyse regional trends;

(*b*) Identify, in consultation with member States, their priorities and emerging issues and consult on regional approaches, taking into consideration subregional aspects;

(*c*) Promote regional dialogue, including subregional synergies, and an exchange of experiences on policies and programmes;

(*d*) Consider common regional positions as inputs to global processes and promote regional follow-up to their outcomes;

(*e*) Propose issues for consideration by the Commission as the basis for possible resolutions;

(*f*) Monitor the implementation of Commission resolutions;

(*g*) Promote a collaborative approach to addressing the development challenges of the region, where appropriate, between Governments and civil society, the private sector, as well as the United Nations and other international organizations at the regional and subregional levels.

13. Further, within their respective areas of purview, the committees shall provide the secretariat, including its regional institutions, with guidance in reviewing the proposed strategic framework and programme of work.

14. The following areas shall be mainstreamed into the work of all committees:

(*a*) Implementation and monitoring the achievement of the relevant internationally agreed development goals;

(*b*) Poverty reduction and balanced integration of the three pillars of sustainable development;

(*c*) Gender equality;

(*d*) The priority needs of least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States.

15. Representatives of civil society and the private sector may, upon consultation with member States, be invited to join the committee sessions as appropriate, in accordance with the rules of procedure of the Commission.

16. The specific issues to be addressed by each of the nine committees in carrying out the functions outlined above are listed in annex II.

III. Ad hoc ministerial conferences and other intergovernmental meetings

17. Subject to the approval of the Commission, ad hoc ministerial conferences and other intergovernmental meetings may be organized on specific and cross-sectoral issues.

18. No more than six such ministerial conferences or other intergovernmental meetings may be held during a calendar year, and the total number of days shall not exceed 20.

19. In those years when a ministerial conference or intergovernmental meeting is held covering issues normally discussed in a committee, the corresponding committee need not be convened.

IV. Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission

20. The functions of the Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission shall be in accordance with the terms of reference contained in annex III.

21. The Advisory Committee may, if necessary, establish its own working groups on consideration of specific issues.

22. The Advisory Committee shall meet with sufficient frequency in both formal and informal meetings on topical subjects, especially prior to the Commission session. The number of formal meetings of the Advisory Committee per calendar year shall not be less than 6 or more than 12. Any additional meetings, formal or informal, will be held in consultation with the Advisory Committee and the Executive Secretary and may not require documentation by the secretariat, unless otherwise requested by the Advisory Committee.

23. Should the need arise to seek the views of United Nations entities or other intergovernmental organizations on subjects of interest to the Advisory Committee, members of the Advisory Committee can, if consensus has been reached, request the secretariat to invite representatives of particular United Nations entities or other intergovernmental organizations to attend a subsequent session of the Advisory Committee.

24. The Advisory Committee shall periodically review the work of subregional offices and regional institutions and actively follow up and report on the implementation of resolutions by member States. The secretariat shall facilitate the reporting on resolutions by preparing the requisite guidelines and templates.

V. Regional institutions under the auspices of the Commission

25. The following institutions under the auspices of the Commission shall continue to function as prescribed in their respective statutes and terms of reference:

(*a*) Asian and Pacific Centre for Transfer of Technology;

(*b*) Centre for Alleviation of Poverty through Sustainable Agriculture;

(*c*) Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific;

(*d*) Centre for Sustainable Agricultural Mechanization;

(*e*) Asian and Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development.

26. The Commission may constitute additional regional institutions that support the achievement of its strategic and programmatic objectives.

VI. General provisions

A. Rules of procedure

27. Unless otherwise specified by the Commission, the rules of procedure of the Commission, including those pertaining to the decision-making process, shall apply, mutatis mutandis, to the committees.

B. Informal session

28. An informal session among the heads of delegations during the ministerial segment of each Commission session may be organized but shall not be institutionalized. The agenda for the informal session shall be decided by consensus and the annotated agenda shall reach members at least 30 days before the opening of the session to ensure the efficiency and effectiveness of the session. Simultaneous interpretation shall be provided.

Annex II to resolution 71/1

Issues to be addressed by committees subsidiary to the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

The issues listed below are the primary issues to be addressed by each committee. The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific may adjust the list of issues for any committee at any time, as appropriate; the committees shall likewise retain the flexibility to address new or emerging issues brought to their attention by the secretariat, upon consultation with member States.

1. Committee on Macroeconomic Policy, Poverty Reduction and Financing for Development:

(*a*) Experiences and practices in formulating and implementing macroeconomic policies to reduce poverty and inequalities, as well as to achieve sustainable and inclusive development;

(*b*) Regional economic development policies and options;

(*c*) Financing for development, including enhancing domestic fiscal resources; increasing social impact investment by the private sector; and accessing regional financing vehicles, arrangements and funds;

(*d*) Experiences and practices in developing regulations and institutions to deepen and strengthen the region's capital markets;

(*e*) Review of pro-poor economic growth policies, particularly in countries with special needs;

(*f*) Policy options and programmes for reducing rural poverty, including those with a gender dimension, through the development of sustainable agriculture.

2. Committee on Trade and Investment:

(*a*) Regional cooperative mechanisms and agreements in trade and investment, including the Asia-Pacific Trade Agreement;

(*b*) Policy options on trade, investment and small- and medium-sized enterprise development;

(*c*) Policy options and frameworks on trade facilitation.

3. Committee on Transport:

(*a*) Transport policy options and programmes, including the evolving post-2015 development agenda, and regional agreements and mandates;

(*b*) The Asian Highway, Trans-Asian Railway and other initiatives, including inter-island shipping and maritime transport promoted by the Commission for planning and financing integrated intermodal transport and logistics systems;

(*c*) Measures to improve road safety and the efficiency of transport operations and logistics;

(*d*) Support for accession to and implementation of international transport agreements;

(*e*) Harmonization of transport standards and documents;

(*f*) Applications of new transport technologies, including intelligent transport systems;

(*g*) Private sector participation for financing and maintaining infrastructure, including through public-private partnerships.

4. Committee on Environment and Development:

(*a*) Policies and strategies for enhancing environmental sustainability of economic and social development, including climate change mitigation and adaptation;

(*b*) Policies and strategies for sustainable management of natural resources, including water;

(*c*) Policies and strategies for promoting inclusive and sustainable urban development.

5. Committee on Information and Communications Technology, Science, Technology and Innovation:

(*a*) Integration of information and communications technology-related issues in development policies, plans and programmes;

(*b*) Transfer and application of information and communications technology at the regional and subregional levels;

(*c*) Information and communications technology, including space applications, for disaster risk reduction;

(*d*) Development of human and institutional capacity in the use of information and communications technology and in the use of science and technology for innovation;

(*e*) Policy options and strategies for enhancing cooperation on the generation of and access to science, technology and innovation for sustainable development, including regional mechanisms for technology transfer;

(*f*) Mainstreaming of science, technology and innovation issues in development policies, strategies and plans.

6. Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction:

(*a*) Policy options and strategies on multi-hazard disaster risk reduction and mitigation;

(*b*) Regional cooperation mechanisms for disaster risk management, including space and other technical support systems;

(*c*) Multi-hazard assessment, preparedness, early warning and response to disaster risks.

7. Committee on Social Development:

(*a*) Review the regional implementation of the internationally agreed goals and commitments on social development;

(*b*) Assess population and development trends, including international migration and its impact on development;

(*c*) Address issues of inequality and promote the social inclusion of youth, persons with disabilities, older persons and other vulnerable social groups;

(*d*) Promote gender equality and women's empowerment;

(*e*) Strengthen social protection and health systems.

8. Committee on Statistics:

(*a*) Ensure that by 2020 all countries in the region have the capability to provide a basic range of population, economic, social and environmental statistics;

(*b*) Create a more adaptive and cost-effective information management environment for national statistical offices through stronger collaboration.

9. Committee on Energy:

(*a*) Assist in the development of strategies towards attaining internationally agreed development goals concerning energy;

(*b*) Promote policy dialogues and networking among member States to develop a regional cooperation framework to enhance energy security, with a view to promoting greater use of sustainable energy resources, including universal access to energy services, improving energy efficiency and scaling up the use of renewable energy, particularly through data and policy analysis, information exchanges and best practices;

(*c*) Identify policy options to strengthen intergovernmental frameworks to promote regional energy connectivity in order to develop a supportive mechanism for regional economic cooperation and integration;

(*d*) Support the implementation of the Asian and Pacific Energy Forum and other regional agreements and mandates, including the evolving post-2015 development agenda, promoted by the Commission for regional cooperation for enhanced energy security and the sustainable use of energy;

(*e*) Identify policy options, strategies, policy dialogues and knowledge platforms to promote access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all, including renewable energy, energy efficiency and advanced and cleaner fossil fuel technologies;

(*f*) Identify policies and strategies to promote investment in energy infrastructure and clean energy technologies.

Annex III to resolution 71/1

Terms of reference of the Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission

The Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission shall have the following functions:

(*a*) To strengthen close cooperation and consultation between the member States and the secretariat, including by providing advice and guidance to be taken into account by the Executive Secretary while undertaking the respective activities;

(*b*) To serve as a deliberative forum for substantive exchange of views and provide guidance on the formulation of the agenda of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific and in connection with economic and social developments that have an impact on the Asia-Pacific region;

(*c*) To advise and guide the Executive Secretary in drawing up proposals for the strategic framework, programme of work and theme topics for sessions of the Commission consistent with the guidance provided by the Commission;

(*d*) To receive, on a regular basis, information on the administrative and financial functioning of the Commission;

(*e*) To advise and guide the Executive Secretary in monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the Commission's programme of work and resource allocation;

(*f*) To review the draft calendar of meetings prior to its submission to the Commission at its annual session;

(*g*) To advise and guide the Executive Secretary on the provisional agenda for sessions of the Commission and committees subsidiary to the Commission, consistent with the need to ensure a results-oriented and focused agenda that is aligned with the development priorities of member States, as defined by them, as well as chapter II of its rules of procedure;

(*h*) To advise and guide the Executive Secretary on the identification of emerging economic and social issues and other relevant issues for incorporation into the provisional agendas and on the formulation of the annotated provisional agendas for Commission sessions;

(*i*) To be informed of collaboration and related arrangements between the secretariat and other international and regional organizations, in particular on long-term cooperation programmes and joint initiatives, including those to be proposed by the Executive Secretary and conducted under the aegis of the Regional Coordination Mechanism;

(*j*) To carry out any other tasks entrusted to it by the Commission.